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Airport Innovation Lab Launches One-Year Program to Test Autonomous Technology *Applications Accepted through Spring 2021*

SAN DIEGO – March 02, 2021 – Autonomous technology that enhances airport functions such as airside operations, terminal space operations, or intra-transit options are the focus of the Airport Innovation Lab’s inaugural one-year program at the San Diego International Airport (SAN). Now through Spring 2021, applications are being accepted to this program that will allow companies with autonomous technology solutions to test and refine their products in a live environment.

Examples of technology accepted to this program are autonomous pushback solutions, AI-based smart assistants, and autonomous transit options for moving passengers and staff throughout the airport within the terminal space. These solutions offer operational efficiency and logistics, and provide a positive passengers experience.

Accepted applicants will participate in a four-quarter, one-year program. In each three-month quarter, participants will partake in a variety of workshops, testing sprints, and one-on-one mentoring sessions that will culminate with demo-day presentations. Topics of the workshops include operations, revenue management, business development, IT/Technology, customer experience, and marketing.

At the end of the program, successful autonomous technology solutions will have the potential to enter into contract negotiations with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, SAN’s owner and operator. Participants will also potentially gain entrée to other airports and analogous businesses including other transportation hubs, convention centers, shopping malls, and other large venues such as ballparks, theme parks and hotels.

“Investments in autonomous solutions have grown by more than \$7 billion since 2010 and national passenger surveys indicate a significant need for process automation at airports,” said Gina Jacobs, Program Manager, Airport Innovation and Customer Experience. “We know there is significant interest in automation at airports around the country. Our one-year program will offer developers a chance to prepare their solutions to be competitive in the US marketplace.”

The one-year program will begin in a virtual format until COVID-19 restrictions are eased. To apply for the program, applicants will need an existing prototype that can be tested in a real-life airport environment and that is new to U.S. airports or an extension of an existing service or product to be tested at SAN.

The Airport Innovation Lab also operates a 16-week accelerator program that was launched in 2016 to reduce barriers for innovators to break into the aviation industry. This program conducts testing and product development in a 3,500 square-foot former Commuter Terminal at SAN. This venue offers a functional mini-terminal area with ticket counters and a bag claim carousel, all without passengers or security concerns.

For more information and to apply, please visit www.innovate.san.org.

ABOUT SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (SAN)

San Diego International Airport (SAN) is the busiest single-runway commercial service airport in the U.S. and the third busiest airport in California. In 2019, SAN welcomed 25-million passengers and offered nonstop flights to destinations worldwide. The airport is an economic driver for the region, contributing nearly \$12 billion in economic activity in 2019 and supports nearly 116,600 jobs. With anticipated passenger growth in the future, the Airport Authority is continuing progress with the New T1 program that will replace Terminal 1 with a larger, more efficient facility and other improvements that enhance the airport experience. The airport is managed and operated by the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority. For more information, please visit san.org.

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